

Message Text

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INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 IO-14 DRC-01 /117 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4088

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

USMISSION BERLIN

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

AMCONSUL MUNICH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 12001

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: THE SCHMIDT-GENSCHER STYLE: COOL AND EFFICIENT

SUMMARY: SCHMIDT AND GENSCHER ARE VERY DIFFERENT MEN FROM THEIR PREDECESSORS, BRANDT AND SCHEEL, AND THE CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP STYLE HAVE NOT BEEN LONG IN MAKING THEMSELVES FELT. THERE IS MORE EFFICIENCY AND PRECISION UNDER THE NEW TEAM, BUT AT THE SAME TIME SOME LOSS OF WARMTH IN PERSONAL RELATIONS. THE CHANGE IN STYLE DOES NOT BETOKEN IMPORTANT FRG POLICY CHANGES TOWARDS THE US. END SUMMARY.

1. BRANDT WAS NEVER RENOWNED FOR INCISIVENESS AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY. HIS LACK OF THESE CHARACTERIS-
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TICS WAS AN ACCEPTED FACT OF HIS PERIOD AS CHANCELLOR.

HE SAW HIMSELF AS AN INTEGRATOR, A CONCILIATOR OF DIVERGENT VIEWS. CABINET DISCUSSIONS TENDED TO BE LONG AND DIFFUSE. MINISTERS WERE GIVEN PLENTY OF ROPE FOR PRESENTING THEIR VIEWS, AND OFTEN THERE WOULD BE NO RESOLUTION, MATTERS IN DISPUTE BEING LEFT ON THE TABLE FOR LATER CONSIDERATION. WHILE BRANDT'S WARMTH IN PERSONAL RELATIONS DID NOT BALANCE HIS ORGANIZATIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SHORTCOMINGS, IT SMOOTHED OVER ROUGHNESSES BETWEEN DIFFERING VIEWPOINTS AND PERSONALITIES.

2. SCHMIDT, WHOSE LONG SUIT IS ACTION SENSE AND DECISIVENESS, HAS PUT HIS OWN MARK ON CABINET PROCEEDINGS. THE WHOLE ORIENTATION IS TOWARD RESOLUTION OF PROBLEMS. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT THERE IS NO DISCUSSION, BUT IT IS SHARPLY FOCUSED. SCHMIDT DOES NOT RELISH MINISTERS RUNNING ON ENDLESSLY AND WILL INTERVENE AND BRING THINGS TO A HALT WHEN THIS IS CALLED FOR. HE INTERJECTS HIMSELF MUCH MORE INTO CABINET DISCUSSION THAN DID BRANDT, WHO OFTEN HEARD OUT OPPOSED VIEWS WITHOUT HIMSELF ENGAGING. SCHMIDT TAKES A LIVELY INTEREST IN POST-CABINET FOLLOW UP, AND WE ARE TOLD HIS CHEF DE CABINET, SCHUELER, HELPS HIM RUN A TAUT SHIP.

3. THE CHANGE AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE FROM SCHEEL TO GENSCHER IS HARDLY LESS MARKED. SCHEEL WAS KNOWN FOR PERSONAL WARMTH AND CHARM. HE IS LESS TENSE THAN GENSCHER, WITH A BROADER VIEW OF AFFAIRS AND PEOPLE AND A CHARACTERISTIC SOUTH GERMAN ATTACHMENT TO THE LIGHTER SIDE OF LIFE. GENSCHER, AN EAST GERMAN, COMES ON MORE SERIOUS, LESS RELAXED, MORE OBVIOUSLY GOAL ORIENTED, LESS KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT FOREIGN AFFAIRS, LESS OUTWARD-LOOKING (HE SPEAKS ONLY GERMAN). HE IS HARDER WORKING THAN SCHEEL. OUR FOREIGN OFFICE CONTACTS TELL US HE HAS SUBJECTED THE MINISTRY TO AN UNENDING SERIES OF REQUESTS FOR BRIEFING PAPERS, AND READ THESE WITH CONCENTRATION AND REMARKABLE GRASP OF DETAIL. THE

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 12001

FOREIGN OFFICE CHIEF OF PERSONNEL RECENTLY TOLD US, WITH SOMETHING APPROACHING AWE, THAT HE HAD TAKEN 17 IMPORTANT MATTERS TO GENSCHER FOR REVIEW AND GOTTEN 14 DECISIONS IMMEDIATELY AND QUICK FOLLOW UP ON THE OTHER THREE.

4. ANOTHER IMPORTANT PERSONNEL CHANGE AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE IS THE REPLACEMENT OF FRANK AS STATE SECRETARY BY GEHLHOFF, FORMERLY FRG REPRESENTATIVE AT THE UN. FRANK, WHO WENT OVER WITH SCHEEL TO BECOME HIS STATE SECRETARY AT THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, WAS TO A LARGE EXTENT THE MOVING FORCE AND SOURCE OF DECISION AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE WHEN SCHEEL WAS MINISTER. SCHEEL TENDED CONFIDENTIAL

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TO STAY WITH BROAD ISSUES AND LEAVE IT TO FRANK TO EXECUTE POLICY DECISIONS. FRANK WAS BOTH ABLE AND INCISIVE--IN MOST RESPECTS THE MAN WHO RAN THE MINISTRY. THERE MAY BE A REVERSAL OF ROLES WITH GENSCHER AS MINISTER AND GEHLHOFF AS STATE SECRETARY. THE LATTER IS WELL THOUGHT OF AND POPULAR IN THE MINISTRY, BUT THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT, SO FAR AT LEAST, THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE THE CUT OF FRANK. MUCH OF THE HARD DECISION-MAKING MAY BE PASSED ON TO GENSCHER, AND THE LATTER WILL LIKELY WANT THIS AND INSIST ON HIS EXECUTIVE ROLE.

5. THESE PERSONNEL CHANGES AND STYLE DIFFERENCES WILL PROBABLY NOT HAVE A VERY APPRECIABLE EFFECT ON FRG POLICY AND SPECIFICALLY FRG RELATIONS WITH THE US. THE NET EFFECT MAY BE POSITIVE IN THAT THE SCHMIDT-GENSCHER TEAM HAS MORE FOCUS THAN THEIR PREDECESSORS. ONE QUALIFICATION MAY BE IN ORDER. AS GENSCHEER ACQUIRES MORE CONFIDENCE, IT WILL BE INTERESTING TO SEE IF, AS SOME BELIEVE, HE WILL SHADE OFF IN A MORE "NATIONAL", MORE "GERMAN" DIRECTION. HIS TIES WITH THE GDR ARE CLOSE. HE GREW UP THERE, AND HIS MOTHER AND OTHER RELATIVES STILL LIVE THERE. THIS BACKGROUND COULD MAKE HIM MORE INWARD-LOOKING THAN SCHEEL, BUT IT IS TOO EARLY TO SAY HOW THIS WILL WORK ITSELF OUT, AND FRG POLICY IMPERATIVES CONTINUE AS BEFORE.
HILLENBRAND

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